(e) and (f) The economic development of backward regions is primarily the responsibility of the State Government concerned and is part of the larger developmental strategy and programmes. These aspects are taken care of by the State Governments while formulating their plans.

508. [*Transferred to the 3rd January* 1991]

Revitalisation of Bharat Ophthalmic Glass Ltd.

509. SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have prepared any plan for the revitalisation of the Bharat Ophthalmic Glass Ltd;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI KAMAL MORARKA): (a) to (c) The working of Bharat Ophthalmic Glass Limited, Durgapur is being regularly monitored by Government and steps are taken for effecting improvement in its performance. This includes upgradation of the existing technology.

Use of alcohol as petroleum substitute

510. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Planning Commission had made Plan panel exercises during 1979 for promoting use of alcohol using agricultural surpluses as a substitute of petroleum;

(b) if so, in view of the Gulf crisis and increase in crude price whether the Planning Commission would rework these exercises in the present scenario; and

(c) whether any serious study has been carried out on the possibilities of liquification of coal as a substitute for crude oil using German or South African Technology?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI KAMAL MORARKA): (a) The Planning Commission had set up a Working Group on Energy Policy in December, 1977 whose Report was received in November, 1979. The Working Group had recommended that the possibilities of introducing producer gas powered vehicles and the use of alcohol to substitute petrol/diesel should be studied and necessary efforts should be initiated in this direction at the earliest. An inter-Ministerial Committee set up by the Ministry of Petroleum and Chemicals explored the possibilities of using alcohol as motor fuel in transport sector. The Report of the Committee was submitted in July, 1989. The Committee opined that surplus alcohol was not available on a sustained basis in this country for use as motor fuel and it should be used only for producing value added chemicals.

(b) In the context of present Gulf crisis, a Steering Committee has been constituted by the Ministry of Petroleum and Chemicals to examine the inter-fuel substitution possibilities of Ethanol, Methanol, CNG and LPG and to evaluate the options, considering their opportunity cost and techno-economic viability, for total/partial replacement of diesel/petrol.

(c) Yes, Sir. The Central Fuel Reseach Institute has been carrying out research and development work on the conversion of coal to liquid fuels for the last two decades.

CBI investigation into corruption case against retired army officer

511. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item which appeared in the daily "Business & Political Observer" New Delhi, dated 28-11-90 captioned "CBI, army at Loggerheads" on the reported indifference of Army officials to let CBI investigate a corruption case against Major General A. K. Gupta (Retired);